

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A software tool for use in configuring firewalls, comprising:
2 an interface which communicates with a database to obtain the
3 identification of firewall devices associated with a network and generate a first
4 display which lists said devices; and
5 means responsive to the selection of one of the devices in said list to
6 generate a second display which lists conduits within said device, wherein each
7 conduit is identified by descriptive names stored in said database for local and
8 external devices and/or networks that are logically connected by the conduit.
- 1 2. The tool of claim 1, further including means responsive to the
2 selection of one of the devices listed in said first display to generate a third display
3 which lists internal networks owned by an entity associated with the selected
4 device, and means to selectively open and close conduits respectively
5 corresponding to said internal networks.
- 1 3. The tool of claim 2 wherein said means to selectively open and
2 close conduits comprises a graphical object adjacent each listing of an internal
3 network that can be selected by a user to toggle between open and closed states for
4 the listed network.
- 1 4. The tool of claim 2 wherein said third display further includes
2 means for adding a new conduit to one of the internal networks.
- 1 5. The tool of claim 4 wherein said means for adding a new conduit
2 to one of the internal networks includes an identification of each protocol that can
3 be associated with the new conduit, and graphical objects via which a user can
4 select each of said protocols.

1 6. A method for configuring firewalls, comprising the following
2 steps:
3 communicating with a database to obtain the identification of firewall
4 devices associated with a network;
5 generating a first display which lists said devices; and
6 detecting the selection of one of the devices in said list; and
7 generating a second display which lists conduits within said device,
8 wherein each conduit is identified by descriptive names stored in said database for
9 local and external devices and/or networks that are logically connected by the
10 conduit.

1 7. The method of claim 6, further including the steps of generating a
2 third display which lists internal networks owned by an entity associated with the
3 selected device, in response to the selection of one of the devices listed in said first
4 display, and which enables a user to selectively open and close conduits
5 respectively corresponding to said internal networks.

1 8. The method of claim 7 wherein said third display includes a
2 graphical object adjacent each listing of an internal network that can be selected by
3 a user to toggle between open and closed states for the listed network.

1 9. The method of claim 7 wherein said third display further enables
2 a user to add a new conduit to one of the internal networks.

1 10. The method of claim 9 wherein said third display includes an
2 identification of each protocol that can be associated with the new conduit, and
3 graphical objects via which a user can select each of said protocols.